

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION #1  
REGULAR MEETING  
MARCH 2, 2010**

**ATTENDANCE:** Commissioner Guy Horvath, Acting Chair; Commissioner Kim Eaton,  
Commissioner David Ryan

**STAFF:** William Minor, Land Use, Construction & Review

**CALL TO ORDER**

Commissioner Horvath called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. and stated he would be serving in the role of Acting Chairman in the absence of Commissioner Sachs. He then reviewed the procedure for conducting the public hearing, and asked those who planned to speak to state their name, credentials or affiliation to the application, and to limit comments only as relevant to the application as listed. He added that documents, photographs, or renderings presented would be retained for the record.

**A. Public Hearing**

1. **Certificate of Appropriateness:** Application #2010 –01 by Sabine Kuczo, City of Bridgeport Central Grants & Community Development for a certificate of appropriateness to replace existing windows and doors at 156 Clarence Street in the Pembroke City Historic District.

Ms. Kuczo introduced herself as representing Central Grants and gave an overview of the application and stated that the owner of 156 Clarence Street had requested lead abatement in the building, which is an historic building. She stated that this was a continuation of the application from last month's meeting where more details were required relative to the project, and a contractor was requested to present the plans and specifications on the materials including siding, windows, doors, etc. She then introduced the contractor for the project, Mr. Leonard Tapia, 221 Hamilton Street, Bridgeport, who reviewed the specifications with the Commissioners.

Commissioner Horvath questioned the details of the photographs in which part of a sub-grade window or door visible on some of the photographs. Mr. Tapia responded that the project will just involve the windows and doors, and introduced Mr. Warner Marshall, representing Regional Housing Rehabilitation 209 Sherman Avenue, New Haven, CT.

Mr. Marshall responded that he had specifications indicating that this could be accomplished without getting the windows out. Mr. Tapia responded that without

removing the vinyl siding and the asbestos siding, the replacement of the windows would be a minor improvement.

Commissioner Horvath pointed out that one document presented last month stated that they were looking for a “six over one” door, but they were actually looking for a “six over one” window. He added that there were six over six windows visible in the photographs. Commissioner Horvath also pointed out that there was some trim around the windows when the siding was put on the building and asked what the process would be used in retrofitting the windows. Mr. Tapia responded that he had reflected the Commissions suggestions from last month’s meeting with the replacement of the windows.

Commissioner Horvath said that the asbestos siding along the driveway had been damaged. He said that the siding had been removed in a certain area and that there had been an unauthorized change in one of the windows, and wanted to be sure that the previous question about the siding covering up something and that there might be lead behind that reduced window and pointed out that the Commission would like to have the entire exterior restored and all the siding repaired because of the damage to the siding.

Mr. Tapia responded that he was replacing the joists, joints, and using pressure treated wood and would be replacing the doors and windows. Commissioner Horvath said that he would like the trim to match, and that the type of wood selected for the trim be stated and Mr. Tapia provided the specification details. Commissioner Horvath said that the problem as stated last month was also that part of the house was covered with asbestos siding and the other portion with vinyl, and Mr. Tapia showed the type of siding and windows that would be used. Commissioner Horvath asked if the siding would go to the ground as the photos revealed foundation detail, and Mr. Tapia replied that he did not know since a friend of his was doing that portion of the job, but he would be sure the foundation would be addressed. Commissioner suggested that some type of concrete wall be filled in around the foundation

Commissioner Horvath then asked if there was anyone present in favor of the application. Hearing none, he then asked if there was anyone present who wished to speak against the application. Hearing none, he then closed the public hearing on Application #2010 – 01 located at 156 Clarence Street.

- 1. Certificate of Appropriateness: Application #2010 – 03** by Tom Tavella for a certificate of appropriateness for Ellsworth Park improvements to build a concession stand and toilets at Ellsworth Park in the Black Rock Historic District.

Tom Tavella introduced himself as the Landscape architect and presented artist rendering plans and blueprint specifications for the application and stated that they were based on Connecticut State Statutes for building designs in an Historic District, which served as the basis for the specifications. He referred to the small concession

building and photograph and stated that according to the statutes a concession stand that is not so regional in character as to deny inspiration over a wide area that was recommended to the attention of proponents of highway improvement would kennel the hot dog in greater grandeur. He added that it was their intention to replicate the texture of the stone masonry from the 1938 structure. Mr. Tavella stated that the plan represents a park style which was presented to the Parks & Recreation Board, who had then asked this to be presented to the Historic District Commission.

Commissioner Evans asked about the lighting and Mr. Tavella responded that it was security recessed lighting tucked up into the eaves and would not be seen. Commissioner Horvath asked for the plan for the security lighting throughout the park, and Mr. Tavella distributed a rendering and stated that it was shepherd's crook style that would be placed along Brewster with three, two along Ellsworth and one along the back fields near the structure. He added that the City had asked for them all to be the same, and to filter the lighting so that the light would be focused away from being shown on the neighbors to avoid light pollution.

Commissioner Evans asked if there would be any signage, and Mr. Tavella responded only to identify restrooms and to post the park rules at the entrance with a sign of metal panels of 12"x17". Commissioner Horvath asked about the pavement material and the benches, and Mr. Tavella replied that the pavement would be scored concrete with park style benches of a standard city style along with curving bench along the playground area.

Commissioner Evans asked there would be roll-up doors at the concession stand and what type of hardware would be used for the doors and knobs. Mr. Tavella replied yes, there would be roll up doors at the concession building with a double door for the storage shed keeping with the historic look. He added that there would be standard latch type of hardware.

Commissioner Horvath asked if there was an overall plan or proto-type offered by the city, and Mr. Tavella replied, yes, but that he had added appropriate materials such as the cupola and masonry block walls for durability. Mr. Horvath commented that the style was very stark and cold and with more design thought it could be more organizational in theme with the structure. He added that how it appears from the street is a critical element and it could be a more civic-minded building. He stated that although the plan seemed organized, the actual layout specifications lacked structural organization and with more effort such adding columns and some tweaking of historic thought, the historical feel could be accomplished.

Mr. Tavella responded that he could go back and re-look at different options, but it depends on the City's goals and needs.

Commissioner Horvath then asked if there was anyone present in favor of the application, and asked those who planned to speak to state their name, credentials or affiliation to the application, and to limit comments only as relevant to the application as listed.

***Note that comments are not verbatim and represent a summary of statements made.***

The following comments were made in favor of the application:

**Mr. Sars Ford, Black Rock Little League Association Commissioner**, stated that he was here to represent the area support for this plan that has been approved by the Black Rock NRZ along with Parks Department. He added that the park is very much needed in the city for the future of the youth and stated that the League has a very active and dedicated crew that provides clean up and maintenance such as painting, fence repairs and the park will be a tremendous improvement to the district.

**Mr. Phil Blagys** stated that he represented the Black Rock Common Council and read a passage stating that the location of condominiums across the park is an example of the inconsistent nature of historic guidelines. He urged the Commission to approve the application and reminded them that this was a concession stand that was designed to fit into the historic district guidelines and to provide the much-needed recreation facilities to the park.

**Mr. Jeff Burr, President of the Little League** stated that he was also here to represent the area support for this plan that has been approved by Recreation and Parks Department. He added that the park improvements and concessions stand is very much needed in the city and the park will be a tremendous improvement to the district.

Commissioner Horvath then asked if there was anyone present who wished to speak against the application. The following comments were made in opposition:

**Ms. Karen Scott, 190 Seabright Avenue**, stated that she was opposed to the application and took exception to the inferences made by the members of the Recreation Department that the Historical groups were opposed to programs of this nature because they did not like children. She added that was not the case, but they do take great care to preserve the historic integrity of the district and that buildings as such is in this application are not historically designed. She added that the condos were done back in the 1970s before the Commission was created and that is not a relevant argument to this case.

Ms. Scott urged the commission to not approve this application as she feels that it has not taken the historic guidelines into serious consideration. She added they have an opportunity to do something special here, that would be a long lasting impression of the

historic integrity and preservation for the district. She feels they should go back to another design attempt to comply with the historic guidelines.

**Ms. Beverly Balar, 64 Hackley Street**, stated that she want a more historic feel, something less dense and to look at other areas such as Putnam Park, Fairfield Historic Cottage where care was taken to build gazebos that were open lighted in nature and not dark. She added that the lighting rendering scale looks high and would actually add light pollution especially in the back areas. She added that there should be a better design that could be special and truly historic in nature.

**Ms. Katherine Van Renesse, 283 Brewster Street** said she was representing the Black Rock Historical Preservation Group and was opposed to the application because the design was not within historical guidelines, and the historical groups were definitely not opposed to programs of this nature because they did not like children. She added that was not the case, but they do take great care to preserve the historic integrity of the district and that buildings as such is in this application are not historically designed. She added that the condos were done back in the 1970s before the Commission was created is not a relevant argument to support this application. She added that she was a partner in the restoration of three homes in the area and has another architect, David Barbour, a “green” designer who is willing to assist the applicant with the modifications proposed. She started to show the proposed plans, and Commissioner Ryan interrupted to ask if this was an appropriate presentation. Mr. Minor stated that an alternate set of plans would have to be done as a separate application and the point of these comments was to make statements in support of opposition of the application as listed. Ms. Van Renesse re-stated her concerns over using the concrete materials and the stark look of the structure and suggested that a green hill would serve as a natural bleacher with green walls rather than a concrete building. She added that this could serve as a performing arts stage or concert area for bands. She implored the Commission to deny the application because it would alter the integrity of area and set a precedent for other recreational applications to use materials that were not within the guidelines for historic preservation

Commissioner Horvath then asked Mr. Tavella if he would like to make any rebuttal comments and he added that there is a “green” building on the field, but there are safety concerns and it is not historically positioned.

Commissioner Horvath then closed the public hearing on Application #2010 –02 at 8:10 p.m.

## **B. New Business – Application Review**

### **Application #2010 – 01 – 156 Clarence Street**

Commissioner Horvath asked the commissioners for comments and discussion relative to the application, and Mr. Ryan commented that as long as last meeting's concerns were addressed.

Commissioner Horvath stated that last month's application was very narrowly concerned with asbestos abatement rather than historical improvement guidelines. He was satisfied with the care taken to present the detailed plans and everything appears to be addressed that was listed as a concern or suggestion, and wanted to clearly list the conditions as required for approval.

**\*\* COMMISSIONER RYAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION  
#2010-02 – 156 CLARENCE STREET WITH THE FOLLOWING  
CONDITIONS:**

- 1. THAT THE HOUSE SHALL HAVE NEW VINYL SIDING .**
- 2. THAT THE REPLACEMENT WINDOWS BE WOOD FRAMED  
WINDOWS CLAD ON THE EXTERIOR WITH VINYL MOUNTED  
AREA OF SIX OVER SIX.**
- 3. THAT THE EXTERIOR CASING FRAME WINDOW BE TWO-SIDED  
TOP CONSISTING OF VIPE COVER WINDOW STOCK COVER WITH  
BRAKE METAL.**
- 4. METAL JOINTS AT THE TOP SHALL NOT BE MITRED BUT HAVE  
HORIZONTAL LAP JOINTS AT A MINIMUM FOUR INCH FASCIA  
BENEATH THE SOFFIT.**
- 5. THE SILL BRAKE METAL BELOW THE WINDOW SHOULD BE  
SUFFICIENT TO THE RECOMMENDED SIDE CASINGS.**
- 6. THE FRONT PORCH SHOULD BE CONCRETE FOUNDATION WALL  
OF 8-12" HEIGHT AT THE FRONT OF THE HOUSE PARGED OVER.**

**\*\* COMISSIONER EVANS SECONDED THE MOTION.  
\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

- 2. Certificate of Appropriateness: Application #2010 – 03 by Tom Tavella  
for a certificate of appropriateness for Ellsworth Park improvements to build a  
concession stand and toilets at Ellsworth Park in the Black Rock Historic District.**

Commissioner Horvath asked the commissioners for comments and discussion relative to the application, and Commissioner Evans commented that there should be better

elevation and more detail of the exterior building, and more clarity on all sides. Commissioner Horvath stated that he was in agreement that a new design was needed because this one was too utilitarian that the City just added brick on the same structure and threw on a cupola. He added that it does not harmonize with the neighborhood and it looks like the architect just ignored the historic photo that he provided in the presentation.

Commissioner Ryan stated that while he applauds the efforts of the Little League, he feels that there should be care taken not to set the bar too high relative to historic look because what was historic back then could not be desirable now. He added that while this appears to be a compromise of all the areas, and the City's intentions to build something quickly, he is reluctant to approve this application as it presents an opportunity to make it historic

**\*\* COMMISSIONER RYAN MOVED TO DENY APPLICATION #2010 – 03  
BY TOM TAVELLA FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS  
FOR ELLSWORTH PARK IMPROVEMENTS TO BUILD A  
CONCESSION STAND AND TOILETS AT ELLSWORTH PARK IN THE  
BLACK ROCK HISTORIC DISTRICT. REASON FOR DENIAL IS  
BECAUSE IT IS AN INAPPROPRIATE DESIGN THAT IS NOT  
COMPATIBLE WITH THE HISTORIC DISTRICT GUIDELINES.  
\*\* COMMISSIONER EVANS SECONDED THE MOTION.  
\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#### **Minutes of January 5, 2010 and February 2, 2010**

It was agreed to table acceptance of the above minutes until the next meeting when there were members from those meetings in attendance.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* COMMISSIONER EVANS MOVED TO ADJOURN.  
\*\* COMMISSIONER RYAN SECONDED.  
\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Marilyn Knox, Telesco Secretarial Services